

**Washington, DC** – Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-Springfield) today voted to stimulate the Oregon economy and provide stability to thousands of Oregon families hit hardest by the recession by extending unemployment benefits. H.R. 6419, the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Act, would have provided immediate assistance to millions of workers who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own. According to the Oregon Employment Division, the bill would have provided \$60 million in assistance to 20,000 Oregonians. Unfortunately, the House Republicans blocked these benefits. Without an extension of unemployment benefits, cuts will begin November 27th impacting four million people throughout the holidays and early next year.

“The Republican contention that extended unemployment benefits create a disincentive for people to find work is bunk,” DeFazio said. “These men and women want to work, there just aren’t jobs out there for them.”

“Many Republicans prefer an extension of the Bush tax cuts for those earning more than \$250,000 a year to stimulate the economy,” DeFazio continued. “Tax cuts for those earning more than \$250,000 would cost 50 times the amount of the unemployment benefits and would not be spent to create jobs to stimulate the economy. But, people receiving unemployment benefits put that money directly into the economy to buy food, gas, and other necessities, helping struggling families make ends meet and providing a much needed boost to local economies.”

Oregon has one of the highest rates of unemployment in the country at 10.5 percent. In some counties it is close to 20 percent.